

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TEGUCI 01688 01 OF 02 081451 Z

46

ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 AGR-20 AID-20 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11

FRB-02 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 TRSE-00 XMB-07 OPIC-12

CIEP-02 LAB-06 SIL-01 OMB-01 NSC-10 SS-15 STR-08

CEA-02 L-03 H-02 DODE-00 PA-03 USIA-12 PRS-01 PM-09

RSR-01 /177 W

----- 004934

R 072315 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4305

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 TEGUCIGALPA 1688

USCINCSO ALSO FOR POLAD

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAGR ELAB SOCI PINT HO

SUBJ: LAND RESETTLEMENT CONTROVERSY SUBSIDES

SUMMARY: ACRIMONIOUS LAND RESETTLEMENT CONTROVERSY HAS NOW SUBSTANTIALLY SUBSIDED, MAINLY DUE TO GOVERNMENT'S ACCEPTANCE OF CATTLEMEN'S PROPOSALS FOR CHANGES IN IMPLEMENTATION OF DECREE NO. 8. PEASANT ORGANIZA-

TION ANACH HAS ALSO AGREED TO CHANGES. INA PEASANT RESETTLEMENTS HAVE INCREASED STEADILY, TO TOTAL OF 4,740 FAMILIES IN MARCH AND APRIL. END SUMMARY.

1. AFTER

CONTROVERSIAL START, GOH IS NOW IMPLEMENTING

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PAGE 02 TEGUCI 01688 01 OF 02 081451 Z

ITS LAND RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM ON STEADILY WIDER FRONT AND WITH CONSIDERABLE REDUCTION OF POLEMICS. CERTAIN CHANGES IN REGULATIONS GOVERNING DECREE NO. 8 WERE PROPOSED BY CATTLEMEN (EMBTEL 1380) AND ACCEPTED BY GOVERNMENT AND ANACH.

2. CHANGES WERE WORKED OUT BY CATTLEMEN (FENAGH), INA AND MINFIN ACOSTA. THEY WERE SUBSEQUENTLY ACCEPTED BY GOH, TOGETHER WITH PROVISION FOR REGULARIZED GOH/ CATTLEMEN CONSULTATIONS. THIS HAS APPARENTLY BOLSTERED CONFIDENCE OF CATTLEMEN. LATTER ARE NOW (A) BEGINNING SERIOUS EFFORTS TO START SELF- SPONSORED FARM EXTENSION PROGRAM FOR UPGRADING IMPROVEMENT OF LANDS, AND (B) HAVE STOPPED OR DRASTICALLY TONED DOWN TENDENTIOUS AND HYSTERICAL PRESS CAMPAIGN.

3. CTH SEC GEN VICTOR ARTILES TOLD EMBASSY MAY 3 THAT, WHILE ANACH HAD PRESENTED TO GEN LOPEZ ITS CRITICISMS OF FENAGH- PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO DECREE NO. 8 IIEGULATIONS (TEGUS 1380), IT HAD NOT MADE THESE PUBLIC, AND LABOR/ CAMPESINO MOVEMENT HAD IN EFFECT ACCEPTED THE FENAGH PROPOSALS IN ORDER TO RELIEVE TENSIONS AND LANDOWNER PRESSURES THAT WERE AT HIGH PITCH LAST MONTH. ANACH AND CTH BELIEVED THAT EXCEPTION OF LAND ON WHICH SOME DEVELOPMENT EFFORT " HAD BEGUN" ALLOWED LANDLORDS TO RETAIN LONG UNUTILIZED PLOTS BY ELEVENTH HOUR MOVES; THEY ALSO FEARED THAT PRE- NOTIFICATION AND APPEAL PROCEDURES COULD BE USED FOR INDEFINITE DELAYS OF FINAL ACTION. ON LATTER POINT THEY WERE REASSURED, HOWEVER, BY INA EXPLANATION THAT TEXT OF AMENDMENT ALLOWS ONLY ONE RAPIDLY ADJUDICATED APPEAL, AND NEW PROCEDURES WILL NOT DELAY FINAL DECISION MORE THAN THREE DAYS. ARTICLES INDICATED THAT, ON EVIDENCE TO DATE, APPEAL PROCEDURE IS PRESENTING NO SERIOUS PROBLEMS, AND CONSIDERABLE SETTLEMENT OF CAMPESINOS IS GOING FORWARD. HE ALSO SAID THAT HE HAS AGAIN BEEN ASSURED BY INA DIRECTOR THAT GOH WILL MAKE AVAILABLE CREDIT AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO ENCOURAGE GENUINELY

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PAGE 03 TEGUCI 01688 01 OF 02 081451 Z

PRODUCTIVE OPERATIONS.

4. IN MAY DAY APPEARANCE AT NATIONAL LABOR RALLY IN SAN PEDRO SULA, REYES RODRIGUEZ, PRESIDENT OF ANACH, SAT ON ONE SIDE OF GEN LOPEZ, WHO PRESIDED, WHILE CELEO GONZALEZ, PRESIDENT OF FESITRANH, FLANKED HIM ON OTHER SIDE. RODRIGUEZ SPECIFICALLY ENDORSED

MILITARY GOVERNMENT AND DECREE NO. 8 IN HIS SPEECH,
CONTRASTING IT WITH NON- PERFORMANCE OF EARLIER GOVERN-
MENT WHICH SUPPORTED LANDLORDS.

5. MEANWHILE, INA IS CONTINUING PEASANT RESETTLEMENTS
AT ACCELERATED RATE. IN RECENT STATEMENT IT GIVES
FOLLOWING FIGURES:

(A) 4,740 FAMILIES RESETTLED IN MARCH AND APRIL;

(B) SOUTHERN ZONE: 31 RESETTLEMENTS OF 2,115
FAMILIES ON 7,116 MANZANAS;

(C) OLANCHO: 20 RESETTLEMENTS OF 618 FAMILIES
ON 2,536 MANZANAS;

(D) EL PARAISO: 9 RESETTLEMENTS OF 411 FAMILIES
ON 1060 MANZANAS;

(E) CORTES: 12 RESETTLEMENTS OF 491 FAMILIES ON
2,695 MANZANAS;

(F) ATLANTIDA: 5 RESETTLEMENTS OF 322 FAMILIES
ON 1,749 MANZANAS.

6. SOME LAND INVASIONS HAVE CONTINUED TO OCCUR, BUT
PROBLEM HAS REMAINED NEGLIGIBLE IN COMPARISON TO PAST
TWO YEARS. (SERIOUS LAND INVASIONS DID NOT BEGIN
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 TEGUCIGALPA 1688

USCINCSO ALSO FOR POLAD

7. COMMENT:

(A) ALTHOUGH SOME OF RESETTLEMENTS HAVE BEEN ON
STATE LANDS AND LANDS VOLUNTARILY SURRENDERED BY BANANA
COMPANIES, GOOD PART HAVE BEEN ON PRIVATELY OCCUPIED
(SOMETIMES ILLEGALLY) OR PRIVATELY OWNED LAND. LAND-
OWNERS WILL OF COURSE NEVER RECONCILE THEMSELVES
HAPPILY TO THIS REDUCTION OF HOLDINGS, BUT IN FINAL
ANALYSIS THEY WERE UNABLE TO MAKE ANY PERSUASIVE
NATIONAL CASE FOR ANYTHING EXCEPT IMPROVED SAFEGUARDS
FOR IMPLEMENTING DECREE NO. 8.

(B) CATTLEMEN' S 19 TH CENTURY PRACTICE OF LOW
DENSITY RANCHING WHERE VAST AND PARTLY ILLEGAL LAND
EXTENSION SUBSTITUTES FOR INVESTMENT IS ULTIMATELY
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UNTENABLE IN POOR COUNTRY WHERE MOST OF LAND IS
COMMUNAL IN TITLE. IN THIS SENSE DECREE NO. 8 IS
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THE CATTLEMEN TO RATIONALIZE THEIR OPERATIONS BY
GREATER INVESTMENT AND IMPROVEMENTS AS COST OF
KEEPING THEIR LAND.

(C) THERE HAVE BEEN IMPERFECTIONS IN INA' S
RATHER ROUGH AND READY IMPLEMENTATION OF DECREE,
AND INA SUFFERS FROM SHORTAGE OF FUNDS FOR COMPLETELY
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PERFORMANCE TO DATE HAS ADDED GENUINE SOCIAL CONTENT
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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a
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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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30 JUN 2005

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Secure: OPEN
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Subject: LAND RESETTLEMENT CONTROVERSY SUBSIDES
TAGS: EAGR, ELAB, SOCI, HO, PINT
To: ARA
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